

# **GENERAL ASSISTANCE**



*Senate Ways and Means Committee*  
*January 28, 2004*

---

# Today's Discussion

## Part 1

- Definitions
- Eligibility
- Who receives assistance
- Description of services

## Part 2

- Caseload
- Reasons for growth
- Budget overview
- Legislative changes
- Agency efforts to manage caseload

# What is General Assistance?

General Assistance (GA) is a state-funded, mandated program that provides cash and medical benefits for individuals who are physically and/or mentally incapacitated and unemployable for at least 90 days.

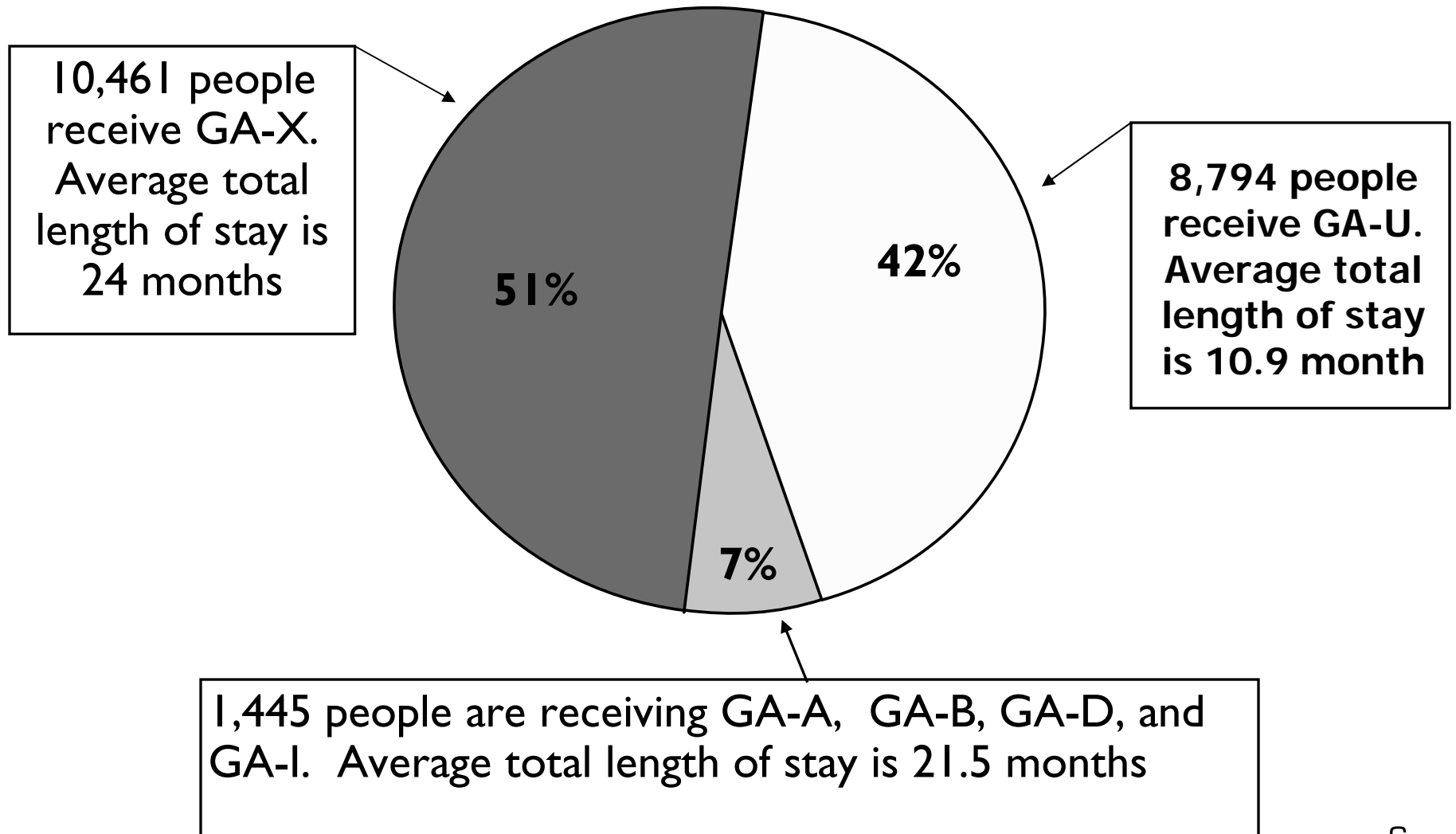
# General Assistance Requirements

- ☞ Incapacitated
- ☞ At least 18 years old, unless married
- ☞ Meet income and resource requirements
- ☞ Reside in Washington state
- ☞ Agree to have their needs for medical treatment and referral assessed
- ☞ Meet citizenship/alien status requirement

# General Assistance Categories

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
GA - Unemployable (GA-U)	18-64 years old who cannot work due to a short-term incapacity expected to last at least 90 days.
GA - Expedited Medicaid Disability (GA-X)	Adults with an incapacity expected to last at least 12 months and are likely to meet federal disability criteria (SSI).
GA for Aged, Blind, Disabled, or Institutionalized (GA-A, GA-B, GA-D, GA-I)	Individuals who are elderly, blind or disabled, or who are residing in institutions. Many cannot qualify for SSI due to their immigrant status.

# General Assistance Population



# Who Receives General Assistance?

- Chemical Dependency is not a qualifying condition for GA. Adults must have another mental or physical incapacity that prevents them from working.
- Many adults are or were homeless, and have a history of chemical dependency, educational deficiencies, and mental health issues (e.g., depression, anxiety).
- The majority of adults live in urban areas, but there are program participants in almost all areas of the state.

# Who Receives General Assistance?

- Adults with no children in the home
- 57% are male and 43% are female
- Average age is 42
- 95% are citizens, but all recipients must be legally residing in the U.S
- 73% are Caucasian, 11% are African-American, 6% are Hispanic, and 10% are other/unknown
- 45% have a mental incapacity, 35% have a physical incapacity, 19% qualify for GA based on age and/or disability (A,B,D & I categories), and 1% are cognitively impaired



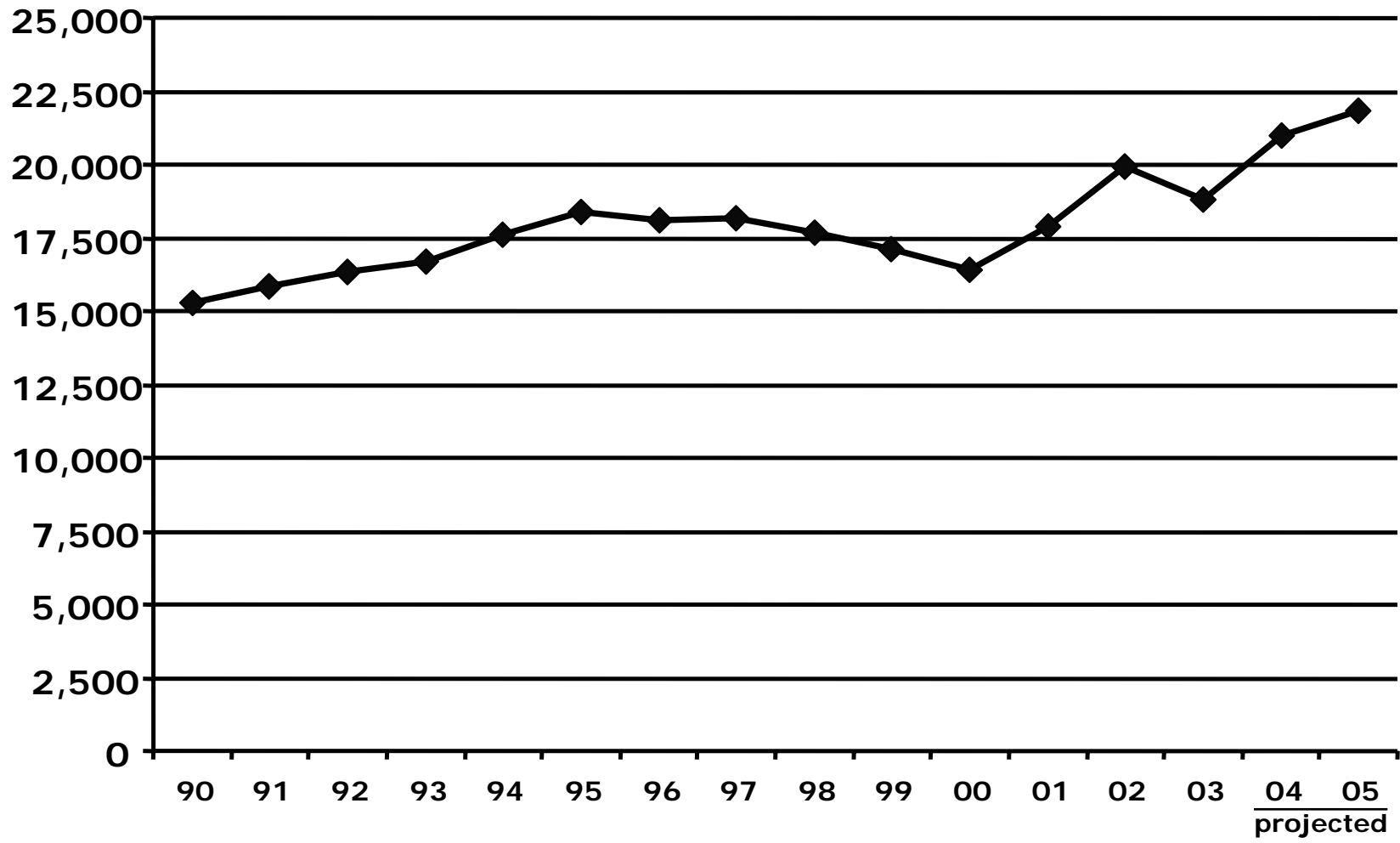
# Services Provided

- ☞ Cash Assistance
  - Maximum amount is \$339 Per month
- ☞ Medical Assistance
  - Medical Care Services (GA-U)
  - Medicaid (GA-X)
- ☞ SSI Facilitation (GA-X)
- ☞ Case Management

# Additional Services

- 86% receive food stamps (basic food)
- 12% receive outpatient chemical dependency treatment
- 12% receive services from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- 31% receive services from the Mental Health Division

# General Assistance Caseloads



# General Assistance Budget

